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November 26, 2012

Representative Wayne A. Schmidt, Chair of the House Commerce Committee

RE: Testimony to House Sub-Committee on Senate Bill 1210

Dear Michigan House Members:

The following is a written version of my testimony to the House Commerce Committee regarding Senate Bill 1210.

“Good morning & thank you for the Committee’s time today.

My name is Marc Hatton and I am the Development Manager for the City of Kalamazoo. I have been a part of the Collaborative Stakeholders Initiative process that led to the recommended Bill before you. I am also here on behalf of the newly formed Association of Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities (ABRA), of which, I am a founder.

Since 1997, the City of Kalamazoo’s Brownfield Redevelopment Initiative has leveraged investments of over \$220 million while retaining or creating over 1,750 jobs for a community of approximately 74,000 residents. In 2011 alone, the City’s brownfield program had 17 active projects that represented just over \$1 million of tax increment revenue.

In partnership with the public and private sector, the success of our program has been an integral piece of our community’s ability to maintain many of our strengths while revitalizing downtown Kalamazoo – even in these difficult economic times.

This would not have been the case without the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act (Act 381, as amended) which was passed into law in 1996.

We all know municipalities will continue to face unprecedented economic challenges over the next few years. We also understand that the State has limited resources to incent economic development and brownfield redevelopment which will be critical to our mutual success.

This is why I am also here today representing the newly formed Association of Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities. Many of the redevelopment projects currently realized in Michigan are those supported by tools and incentives only available through inclusion in a Local Brownfield Plan and Program created through a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. ABRA is dedicated to representing Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities on matters of interest, offering programmatic support, acting as a central clearinghouse of BRA related ideas, information, best



practices, and providing information to the legislature on critical programs that affect the important work that we do. Currently, there are approximately 287 Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities in Michigan.

The programs contained within Act 381, its amendments, and the amendment that is before you today, allows communities to promote economic development activity at challenged sites, develop public/private partnerships, and leverage those investments for their constituents.

Today, the legislature has the opportunity to continue to strengthen these programs by passing Senate Bill 1210 which represents hundreds of hours of expert brownfield practitioners, municipal government representatives, and dedicated regulator's input and review. The suggested amendment to Act 381 again strengthens and clarifies a program that has been proven to create new investment, jobs and improve our communities by cleaning up and redeveloping sites of contamination, blight, functional obsolescence, and historic resource.

Thank you very much for your time."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Hatton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marc Hatton  
Development Manager